



Shaping places
that make a
positive impact
on people's lives

Connecting people, places and the environment

We believe in the power of places to shape better lives for the people who use them - and are driven to deliver healthier, safer and smarter buildings and spaces that are friendlier to the environment.



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Creating a positive impact on society and the environment

This social value report highlights achievements over the past year and the progress we have made in areas including: sustainability, diversity and inclusion, employee wellbeing, and within communities through our projects.

The Social Value Act has been a driving force in our commitment to social responsibility through our extensive work within the public sector. We have identified and prioritised what matters most to our communities, as well as our own team at AHR. We believe in three pillars of sustainability – environmental, economic and social sustainability. With a focus on social value, we can make a long-term contribution towards these wider sustainability goals.

We are passionate about knowledge sharing and continue to take a collaborative approach to build collective knowledge within our industry and the wider property sector. Through sharing we can have a wider impact beyond our own sphere of influence.

Inspiring future generations and supporting young people in career development and apprenticeships is a key priority for us. We are committed to nurturing young talent of all ages, engaging with schools and universities, as well as welcoming young people into the practice.

We are dedicated to supporting our people both in their professional and personal lives. We believe in supporting a happy, healthy workforce and have implemented initiatives that promote physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing.

We are also committed to creating a cleaner future through our sustainability initiatives. We have a [carbon reduction plan](#) in place to reduce our environmental impact and we promote sustainable practices throughout our business and projects.

This report demonstrates our ongoing commitment to creating a positive impact on society and the environment. We hope that you will join us on this journey towards a better, more sustainable future.

As a socially responsible company, we understand the importance of creating a positive impact on society and the environment. It is a culture that we've embedded within our practice.



Anthony Langan
Managing Director,
Architecture



Allan Hunt
Managing Director,
Building Consultancy

Our commitment to sustainability is shared by everyone at AHR

We promote sustainability throughout our projects and working practices. Through our three pillars we deliver places and spaces that are unique, healthy, and inspiring additions to the built environment.

Part of our commitment to sustainability is a focus on social value because the future health, wellbeing and prosperity of people are intrinsically linked to the quality of the places and environment they live, work and socialise in.

Three pillars of sustainability



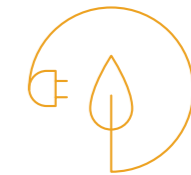
Economic sustainability

We focus on delivering long-term, future proof solutions. By taking into consideration reuse, whole life costing, energy efficiency, and waste elimination, we shape places and spaces that will remain effective, efficient and desirable for generations to come. Wherever possible, we support local economies by prioritising the use of local materials, businesses and supply chains.



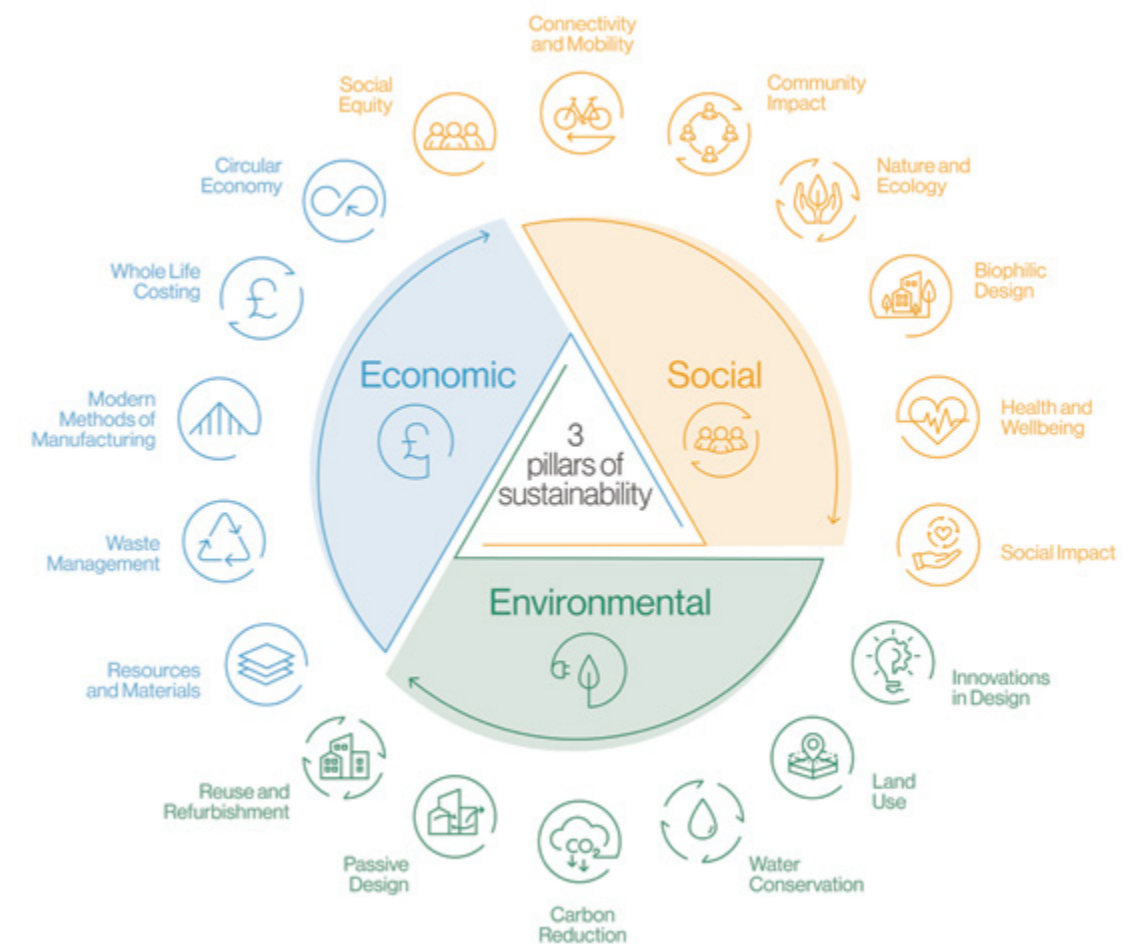
Social sustainability

We provide a platform from which everyone involved in our projects can be heard. By engaging directly with local communities, as well as the people who work with and for us, we can fully understand their needs and expectations. Helping us to shape environments that promote inclusivity, improve wellbeing, and enhance long-term prospects – creating greater social value.



Environmental sustainability

We are committed to minimising the footprint of our projects, by applying innovative design practices that promote a Net Zero Carbon future. In support of industry-wide change, we use science-based targets and recognised methods of measurement to demonstrate compliance, surpass sustainability standards, and drive innovation in this area.



Our 2022 achievements at a glance

We create social value in many ways – through our projects, our external activities and partnerships, and as an employer.

This social value report highlights achievements throughout 2022 and the progress we have made across our three objectives.



Fair right to education



Inclusive, accessible communities



Improved health and wellbeing

A summary of our achievements



136

work experience weeks with us on placement



£6,089

raised by staff for charity

34 work experience students supported

28 fundraising events undertaken

4 staff mentored to support achieving qualifications

15 charities supported

16 student mentoring events took place

1 RIBA AHR Scholarship

10 Passivhaus designers qualified

12 1
Apprentices supported Visiting Professorship



20 social events organised

23 wellbeing champions

£408k

Total social value impact



We champion a fair right to education for all

As passionate supporters of equal rights to education, we strive to inspire future generations and are committed to providing better opportunities to those from disadvantaged backgrounds. By continually sharing insights gathered from our work, we also aim to promote the open exchange of knowledge in our industry.

Our Communities

Work experience and mentoring

Every year we offer work experience placements and mentor students from schools, colleges and universities across the country. This year was no exception.

34

work experience students supported

136

combined work experience weeks with us on placement

16

student mentoring events took place across the practice

Highlights

A Birmingham City University student completed a 2-week work experience with us in our Shrewsbury and Birmingham offices. She was tutored in Revit, assisted on current projects, shadowed our team, and attended client meetings.

A student with chronic fatigue syndrome from Cheshire College joined the Shrewsbury office to complete 315 hours training as part of the T-Level course. The student learnt Revit, created a design using our work experience programme and assisted on projects.

A Part 1, 1st year architecture student from Chester University joined us on a site visit to Chester Northgate. It allowed them to see the scope and complexity of the scheme, while seeing how the drawings translated into a building.



Our Communities

Engaging with university students

Sharing our knowledge and experience with the next generation is a key part of what we do. Many of our team participate as guest lecturers at universities across the UK.

Manisa Mistry delivered a Nexus tour and talk at the University of Leeds for their students as well as professionals at the IStuctE. Elsewhere, Joaquin Espasandin delivered lectures to the Manchester School of Architecture and Robert Hopkins to the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University. Whilst in Bristol, Hira Silverthorne-Teirney was a guest lecturer to the University of the West of England.

Inspiring student learning

Royal Academy of Engineering Visiting Professorship at Cardiff Metropolitan University
Biophilic Design and Sustainability

Cardiff Metropolitan University approached Robert Hopkins to participate in the scheme. The scheme sees him working with the university for three years.

Rob joined the university in the 21/22 academic year and together they identified areas of improvement to the curriculum. A carbon literacy programme that is currently being embedded across the entire university, not just the School of Art and Design.

Our Communities

RIBA AHR Scholarship

As part of our commitment to support inclusivity in the profession, we have been running the RIBA AHR Scholarship programme since 2008.

This year's scholarship was designed to support students from low-income households with a £6,000 bursary to assist them with course and living costs through their Part 2 studies. Recipients are also assigned a mentor – an AHR architect – as well as a four-week paid placement at one of our offices. The 2022 RIBA AHR Scholarship recipient was Reem Taha Hajj Ahmad, a RIBA Part 2 student at The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL.

“I am delighted and grateful to receive the Scholarship. It motivates me to achieve the humanitarian message I aspire to deliver through my Architectural work.”

Reem Taha Hajj Ahmad
2022 RIBA AHR Scholarship Recipient



[Read more to find out what Reem is enjoying most about her experience](#)



Our People

Apprenticeships

We are proud to support apprentices across all our departments, at all levels, honing their talents and developing their skills.

Across our nine offices we had apprentices building their skills in a multitude of areas:

- Construction Management: Sustainability
- Assistant Accountant
- Construction Technical and Professional: Built Environment Design
- Architecture
- Digital Marketing
- Design and Drafting
- Operational Management and Leadership
- Human Resources Support

“Completing this apprenticeship has been great for complimenting my existing HR Management knowledge and experience. It has given me the theoretical understanding, as well as practical application of the tools and techniques, which have contributed to making me a more rounded manager within the business.”

Sharon Armstrong
Level 5 Operational Management and Leadership





Our People

Developing new skills

We support our team in Continuing Professional Development and attaining their CPD points during the year.

This helps in their personal development and achievement of career aspirations. It's also important for our practice that our architects and building surveyors are not only trained, skilled and knowledgeable; but they can apply this to the safe design and operation of buildings. We recognise how important this is as legislation and standards evolve; such as the passing of The Building Safety Act 2022 which has introduced "ground-breaking reforms to give residents and homeowners more rights, powers and protections – so homes across the country are safer."

In addition to this, we have a Residential Tall Buildings Risk Group to help ensure the safety of the buildings we design.

Members of our Building Consultancy team were given the opportunity to take part in a variety of training. For new managers, we ran a New Manager Development programme to help them understand their new role, their management style and how to get the best out of their teams. Personal Effectiveness training, as well as Handling Difficult Conversations and Situations, took place across Huddersfield, Manchester and Bristol.



Our People

Certified Passivhaus Designers

We believe in a zero-carbon future and have been involved in the development of low-energy solutions in buildings for over 15 years.

We supported ten of our architects to become certified Passivhaus designers. In addition to having in-house Passivhaus designers, we are also Passivhaus Trust members and are working on a number of Passivhaus schemes, including designing one of the UK's largest Passivhaus education buildings.

Our work

Knowledge sharing

Sharing our knowledge amongst industry colleagues is a key part of our approach to improving the built environment.

Across the year we took part in numerous events that were attended by people representing disciplines beyond architecture and surveying; from construction and planning to developers and asset management.

London Real Estate Forum

Liverpool: Change through innovation – a panel discussion exploring investment opportunities and projects focused on innovation and leading the economic change.

London Festival of Architecture

London to Liverpool: Behind the Design of the Royal College of Physicians' Buildings – a talk and virtual tour.

Operating Theatre Block Design webinar

A panel discussion on the differences in operating theatre designs and how the argument of new build and refurbishment impacts this.

Education Estates Conference

Innovation in education design – a presentation on how the new Health and Innovation campus at the University of Huddersfield prioritises occupant health and wellbeing. The first university building design to achieve WELL Platinum.

Place North West Net Zero Conference

A presentation and panel discussion on the solutions to help us achieve Net Zero.

Our work

Recognised Awards

Education Estates Award 2022

Architectural Practice of the Year - Winner

Our stakeholder engagement approach is intelligent and innovative, delivering solutions which prioritise staff and student experiences.

RIBA South West Award 2022

School of Engineering, UWE - Winner (01)

Project Architect of the Year Award

Winner - Hira Silverthorne-Teirney (02)

Supporting the University's vision of promoting multi-disciplinary collaborative learning – setting the scene through open spaces which encourages natural light and embrace the faculty's commitment to encouraging diversity within future engineers.





We foster inclusive accessible communities

By working with people from all cultures and backgrounds, we shape a society where everyone feels heard, is equally supported, and is able to flourish. We are continually becoming a more representative organisation, who delivers places that encourage diverse communities to thrive.



Our Communities

Inclusive opportunities for young people

We announced that we had signed up to become a Member of Speakers for Schools who support young people through helping them secure work experience placements and inspiring talks to fuel their ambition. So far, the charity has reached over one million students.

Inspiring inclusivity

As part of International Women's Day, Senior Building Surveyor Sarah Berry took part in a session at Cheetham CE Community Academy, aimed at shifting perceptions around professions that are often considered male-dominated. Sarah represented women in construction and was joined by other female professionals from the police and engineering services. (01)

Our 2022 Christmas e-card was designed by Alleyah Larder from Doncaster University and College Centre, who won our student competition. The theme was sustainability and Alleyah's design beautifully reflected this, in a meaningful, artistic and skilled way. As the winner – Alleyah has received a £100 gift voucher and her college has received a £350 donation towards school materials. (02)



Our Communities

Inspiring future generations

Our partnership with Speakers for Schools enables us to provide amazing opportunities for young people across the UK as we continue our journey to create a more inclusive profession.



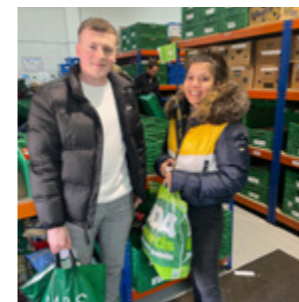
Sustainability design workshop

We hosted a design ideas workshop for Year 12 students from Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire in Scunthorpe. The workshop contributed to their modules relating to sustainability and net zero carbon studies. The students spent the time learning and understanding how we approach our projects, gaining insights into how we design. We also collaborated with the students to help develop their vision for their hometown. It was a valuable opportunity for us to gain feedback from the community for the spaces we create; and for them to see their influence in our ongoing and future designs.



Role of an architect presentation

Luke Smith from our Bristol office, with ISG, visited the City of Bristol college to give students an insight into what it's like to be an architect. The day involved a presentation on our nearby Bottleyard studios project, including a 3D design that students could navigate using an Xbox controller, followed by a trip to the site. The day was completed with a friendly competition where the students constructed their own towers from spaghetti, making them strong enough to hold a marshmallow!



Our Communities

Fundraising and donations

Every year, across our nine offices, our teams participate in numerous fundraising events to support local, national and international charities.

28

charity events organised

£6,089

combined total raised for charity

15

key charities supported



Fundraising initiatives

Our building consultancy team in Bristol took part in Frank Water's Stand Up for Safe Water paddleboarding event. A fundraising event in aid of Frank Water, a charity dedicated to providing underprivileged communities with access to clean and safe water.

Across our offices, we got into the festive spirit and donned our very best Christmas jumpers in support of Save the Children. This annual event raises money for children in the UK and across the world to give them a future they deserve.

We hosted numerous MacMillan coffee mornings with bake off competitions, raffles and games. The events raised money for MacMillan Cancer support providing emotional, physical and financial support to people with cancer.

We also ran Bake for the Ukraine events to support the DEC Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal. Colleagues raised £1,000 for the Appeal which was doubled by AHR, donating a total of £2,000.

In Bristol, the team held numerous bake-offs in aid of Caring in Bristol, a charity dedicated to working with people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.



Our Communities

Homes for Ukraine

Working with Homes for Ukraine, our team drew up plans 'pro-bono' to refresh and prepare a safe home for Ukrainian families.

A manor house that had previously been used for office space was transformed into individual apartments with shared facilities. Up to 55 Ukrainians now have a safe home in the UK living in the manor house.

Our People

Equality, diversity and inclusion

As a practice we are working to become a more diverse workplace that is more representative of the communities we work for.

We held two key training programmes to support our teams to make choices that support this objective - 'Inclusive Leadership' and 'Inclusive Recruitment and Selection'.

We celebrated numerous faiths and festivals including Eid, Diwali, Easter and Christmas with food, talks and fun activities.

Our People

Financial wellbeing

2022 was a challenging year for everyone with rising inflation and the cost-of-living crisis.

In recognition of the hard work of our people across the practice and the financial challenges many faced, we offered financial support with a one-off cost of living payment in addition to annual salary increases.

We undertook a review of employee benefits to ensure they supported and suited the needs of our team. We introduced several initiatives including:



An increase in employer-matched pension contributions



A new Cycle to Work Scheme



Employee discounts membership for big retail brands



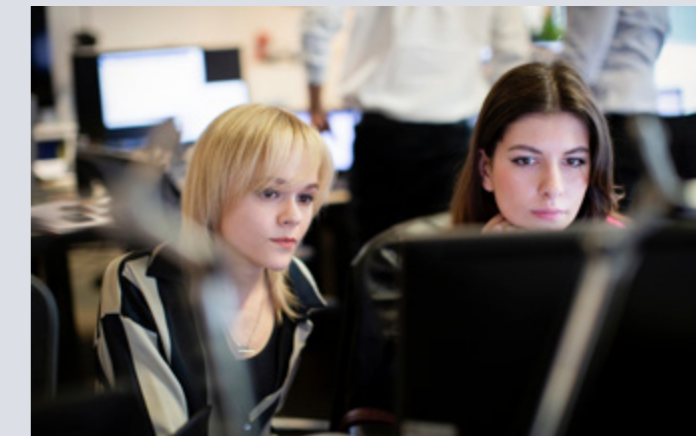
The Reward Hub, an online portal enabling staff to access pay and benefits online

Our People

Learning culture

We pay for professional memberships for our people.

We do this to support our team in their respective professions and to embed a learning culture and best practice, as well as ensuring quality assurance across the practice.



Real Living Wage Employer

As part of our commitment to being a Real Living Wage Employer, we aim to extend this to regular subcontracted staff. In 2022, we began engaging our supply chain. This included our cleaning companies to encourage this change and we committed to including this as part of the review process when office leases come up for renewal.





Our Work

Breathing new life

We've been working on some amazing regeneration projects over the last 12 months.

These projects have been a fantastic opportunity to transform the places where people live. Considering the needs of all community stakeholders is at the forefront of how we approach our work.

Chester Northgate

A new shopping and leisure destination in the heart of Chester. With a new market hall, six-screen cinema, cafes, bars and restaurants, a co-working office space, a new public square and an 800 space multi-storey car park, this regenerative scheme is revitalising the city centre.

We engaged with over 100 involved stakeholders including Historic England, Members Working Group, CW&C Planning, CW&C Design Review Panel, Chester Civic Society, Local Business Groups, Disabled Access Forum, and Market traders. These groups all had individual needs that we had to ensure we provided for.

Since fully opening, the new market has seen a huge influx of visitors and more than trebling the peak pre-pandemic footfall in the old market, which closed in October. Seeing around 600,000 visitors in its first few months alone.

[Read more about the project](#)

Calthorpe Community Centre

We have been working with Saheli Hub for several years to help create a new vision for a community building for the group at Calthorpe Park in Birmingham. Saheli Hub's aim is to create a women's centre in Balsall Heath run for and by women.

The centre has the potential to change the lives of the residents and address long-term inequalities in health, community cohesion, education and employment. It will give women the opportunity to become empowered physically and economically, changing their lives and community as a whole and saving money over the long term for the NHS, GP services/practices and adult social care.



Our work

Recognised Awards

Planning Awards 2022

Planning for Increased Housing Delivery Winner - Langarth Garden Village (01)

A new sustainable, community-led masterplan, in the heart of Cornwall. The biggest project Cornwall Council has ever achieved permission for, Langarth forms part of wider strategy for the area to support local infrastructure and improve residents' quality of life.



“From the initial competition and interviews through to the planning approval, the AHR team has demonstrated a clear understanding of the vision that Cornwall Council had and conveyed it in an exciting and innovative manner.”

Les Allen
Langarth & Hayle Client Programme
Director Cornwall Council



We support improved health and wellbeing



Just as sustainability is a fundamental part of the built environment, we believe so too is the concept of wellness. As advocates of healthy, responsible, and sustainable practices, we are committed to shaping places that support and improve people's physical and mental wellbeing.

Our Communities

Sustainability Champions

Embedding sustainable development principles is at the heart of our practice.

We do this, not only in our own work, but collaborate with the rest of our industry so that collectively we can work together to leave the world a better place.

Positively contributing to the future growth of a leading UK city

Director, Gurminder (Gim) Sanghera joined the Leeds Property Forum Steering Group. The Forum was launched by West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and provides a sounding board for infrastructure proposals and major schemes brought forward by the city. Since joining, Gim has become Chair of the Sustainability Group, which was formed to support Climate Action Leeds, a collaborative programme with an aim to create a zero carbon, nature friendly, socially just Leeds by the 2030s.

Promoting a Net Zero Carbon future

The coalition developing the UK Net Zero Carbon Buildings Standard, including RIBA, RICS and the UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) launched its Call for Evidence. Encouraging leading industry organisations to submit operational energy and embodied carbon data, which will be critical to ensure that the Standard is reflective of the best available evidence, and that the development process is as inclusive as possible. We raised awareness of this initiative and shared data.

[Learn more about our sustainability commitments](#)



Our People

Wellbeing

As a practice we believe in the wellbeing of our colleagues where everyone feels safe and supported.

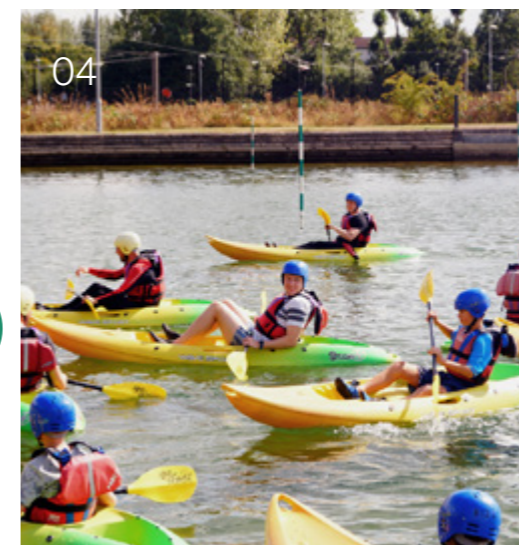
- Mental health first aiders
- Wellbeing champions
- Introduced a permanent hybrid working policy – supported with regular management check-ins to ensure mental wellbeing
- A range of inclusive social activities
- Summer and Christmas away days
- Employee Assistance Programme
- Wellbeing breakfasts and fruit available in our offices
- Mental health training for managers and employees
- A GP service, available 24/7, 365 days a year

Our People

Menopause Matters

Davina McCall's 'Making Menopause Matter at Work' webinar helped our people learn how we can better support women living through the menopause.

As a practice we have an array of resources available including the sharing of helpful links and webinars, recommended reading and an anonymous service where experiences can be shared to help others understand the effects of the menopause. With 100% of women experiencing the menopause at some point in their lives, we understand the need to raise awareness and learn how to fully support our colleagues and family members.



Our People

Supporting colleagues

We have trained and appointed 23 Wellbeing Champions across the business.

In addition to our Mental Health First Aiders, the Champions are there to support colleagues who need a listening ear, signpost support available and work with the business to identify wellbeing benefits and initiatives that our employees will really value. This year we are focusing on these four areas: financial, mental and emotional, physical and social wellbeing with the aim of actively helping our employees to be happy, healthy and motivated.

Social activities

A visit to Castlefield Viaduct, a new urban park from the National Trust, gave the Manchester team an opportunity to get away from their desks and enjoy a break in nature. (01)

Our building consultancy and central services teams from across our UK offices enjoyed their first summer social in three years. Beginning with lunch at Bagden Hall Hotel in Huddersfield the team moved on to a games afternoon out in the grounds with axe throwing, archery, rocket building and human sheep herding. The day was rounded off with a BBQ and drinks. (02)

In Bristol, our team got the chance to enjoy a day out together with a photography competition around the harbour that was followed by a hand drawn sketch round. (03)

Our London team enjoyed an away day out in Newhall exploring some contemporary architectural housing schemes before heading down to the Lee Valley White Water Centre to get involved in rodeo rafting, paddleboarding and kayaking. (04)

Our Work

Our projects

We're at the forefront of regeneration and building design that considers the wellbeing of the community and building users, as well as the environmental impact of the built environment. This year saw some major regeneration projects take a significant step forward.

HEMISPHERE, Liverpool

Located in the heart of the Knowledge Quarter, this sustainability-led, Grade A office building focuses on what the future workplace will look and feel like. Taking inspiration from the human brain and incorporating biophilic interventions throughout, the workplace prioritises health, social and cultural wellbeing.

With collaboration spaces, a wellness studio, cafe and new areas of public realm, the project aspires to create a place for a happier and healthier workforce, encouraging creativity and productivity through its smart design features. It will also feature an innovation lab and outdoor spaces for exercise and relaxation for both employees and the general public to enjoy

Setting the benchmark in sustainability, HEMISPHERE is on track to become one of the first new builds in the UK designed to achieve six global sustainability accreditations including; Operational Net-Zero Carbon, Platinum WELL, BREEAM Excellent, EPC Rated A, WiredScore certified and NABERS 5.5*.

The building is uniquely designed to be operational Net-Zero carbon, embodying 30% less carbon than a typical office building and consume 30% less energy.

[Read more about the project](#)

Victoria Square, Braintree
A major mixed use regeneration project that rejuvenates and revitalises Braintree town centre in Essex. Alongside new homes and a hotel, a new health and wellbeing centre provides residents access to more integrated services, with options of facilities including a GP surgery, pharmacy and further preventative healthcare services. We worked closely with the community, Council, Historic England and the NHS allowing us to gain an understanding of the wider views and needs of the public. The enhanced public realm encourages the community to come together, with a publicly accessible garden at its centrepiece.



Our work

Recognised Awards

BCO Regional Awards 2022

Innovation - Winner - The Spine (01)

Set to be one of the healthiest buildings in the world. In the heart of Liverpool's Knowledge Quarter, The Spine is the new northern home for the Royal College of Physicians (RCP). Designed with a philosophy that people will feel healthier when they walk out of the building than when they walk in, The Spine is on track to be one of six WELL Platinum buildings in the UK.

“Our award winner this year is an impeccable example of how workplace design can support cultural change. But it's in its promotion of human health where it is truly ground-breaking. With biophilic and salutogenic principles at the heart of its conception, every inch of this working landscape enriches all who visit and work there. A world-leading success story”

BCO Northern Judges
2022 Awards

Daphne Steele Building, Huddersfield

Located in the University of Huddersfield's new Health and Innovation Campus, it is the first university building to be designed to WELL Platinum Standard. Set to deliver outstanding learning experiences, with cutting-edge health education and research, the building will help to shape the future of healthcare professionals. Using biophilic design and strong connections to nature, the interior will help promote new ways of thinking about sustainable environments that improve people's health and comfort as they use the space.



Continuing our social value journey

As we reflect on the significant progress made in 2022, we take pride in our achievements that have enhanced the health, wellbeing and prosperity of the people who use our places and the communities we work in.

We look forward to continuing to build upon our three objectives, through 2023.



Fair right to
education



Inclusive, accessible
communities



Improved health and
wellbeing

Stay connected with us by following our social media channels for all the latest updates.



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